

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Second Wildfire Forces More Evacuations

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — Fire officials say a second wildfire is forcing evacuations in neighborhoods north of Flagstaff, Ariz. Coconino County authorities say the Timberline Estates, Wupatki Trails and the Fernwood neighborhood are being evacuated. Fire information officials could not immediately say how many people were being asked to leave their homes. Coconino National Forest spokeswoman Karen Malis-Clark says the blaze was spotted Sunday afternoon on the north end of Shultz Pass, between the San Francisco Peaks and Mount Elden. She says the fire is torching treetops and sending up an impressive column of smoke. Hot shot crews, helicopters and air tankers are fighting the flames.

Israel Releases New List Of Banned Goods

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel pledged Sunday it will immediately allow all goods into Gaza except weapons and items deemed to have a military use under its decision to ease its three-year-old blockade of the Palestinian territory.

The list of banned goods replaces an old list of allowed items that permitted only basic humanitarian supplies for the 1.5 million Gazans. Under the new system, the government said practically all non-military items can enter Gaza freely.

"From now on, there is a green light of approval for all goods to enter Gaza except for military items and materials that can strengthen Hamas' military machine," Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev said.

Israel decided on Thursday to ease the blockade under intense international pressure after its raid on a blockade-busting international flotilla bound for Gaza killed nine pro-Palestinian activists.

In a critical shift, Israel said it would allow construction materials into Gaza for projects approved by the Palestinian Authority, such as housing and schools, as long as the projects are under international supervision. Up to now, Israel has banned most construction materials, including cement.

Mother: Van der Sloot Has Mental Problems

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Joran van der Sloot, the chief suspect in the murder of one woman and the disappearance of another, suffers mental problems, his mother was quoted Sunday as saying.

Van der Sloot, a 22-year-old Dutchman, is suspected in the disappearance of American teenager Natalee Holloway in Aruba in 2005. He sits now in a prison compound on the dusty outskirts of Peru's capital, Lima, held on suspicion of killing 21-year-old Stephany Flores on May 30 — five years to the day after Holloway vanished while on vacation.

"My son is sick in his head," the Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf quoted Anita van der Sloot as saying in an interview published on its website Sunday. The comments were her first since her son's most recent arrest.

Police in Peru say Van der Sloot has confessed to killing Flores. He is scheduled to be interviewed by a judge in Lima next week.

He has confessed to involvement in Holloway's disappearance, then retracted his confession, several times. Holloway was last seen in his company.

NY Salesmen Charged After Demo Goes Awry

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — Two vacuum salesmen didn't exactly close the deal at a recent home demonstration in central New York. State police charged the Syracuse men with a misdemeanor after a \$1,300 Sealy latex foam mattress was damaged. Trooper Andy Davis said the damage occurred during a demonstration Monday at a home in Richfield Springs. Davis wouldn't elaborate on what was done to the mattress.

Davis said the men were both at the home when police arrived and were trying to save the situation. They were charged with reckless endangerment of property.

The mattress owner is looking for reimbursement.

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Ex-Defense Chief Wins Columbia Runoff In Rout

BY FRANK BAJAK
Associated Press Writer

BOGOTA, Colombia — A former defense minister from a powerful political clan who oversaw a major weakening of leftist rebels won Colombia's presidency Sunday, routing an eccentric outsider in a runoff.

The victory for Juan Manuel Santos, a 58-year-old economist and three-time government minister, was a ringing endorsement of outgoing conservative President Alvaro Uribe, whose U.S.-backed security policies he helped craft and promised to continue.

With nearly all polling stations reporting, Santos had 69 percent of the vote against 28 percent for former two-time Bogota Mayor Antanas Mockus. It was largest margin of victory in a presidential vote in modern Colombian history, said Carlos Ariel Sanchez, director of the national electoral council.

More than 3 percent of voters tendered protest ballots, indicating dissatisfaction with both candidates.

Mockus ran an anti-corruption

campaign atop a fledgling Green Party that many Colombians considered naive if well-intentioned. But after catapulting into early contention he stumbled with a series of gaffes that had Colombians questioning his ability to run a country still mired in a half-century-old conflict.

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Exec Must Clean Oil Spill, BP's Image

BY RAPHAEL SATTER
AND TOM MURPHY
Associated Press Writers

LONDON — BP's new strategy to clean up its image and the Gulf Coast is to hand the job from its British CEO, widely criticized for tone-deaf comments and yachting amid the crisis, to one of its top-ranking Americans.

Bob Dudley is no stranger to tough situations, having protected his company's interests in rough dealing in Russia even after he was barred from the country. Perhaps most importantly, he is a fresh face for the oil giant as it attempts to fix the spill and protect its future.

Dudley will take over as BP's point man on the spill response, reporting to CEO Tony Hayward. Company officials have variously put the time frame at anywhere from immediately until after the spill is plugged, which isn't likely to happen until August.

Hayward's gaffes include saying, "I'd like my life back," and most recently engaging a yacht race off the coast of England on Saturday while oil spill relief workers sweated it out. BP officials, however, say the switch is intended to allow Hayward to focus on running the company, rather than an attempt to bounce back from bad publicity.

Dudley, BP's managing director, spent part of his boyhood in Hattiesburg, Miss., an easy drive from the coast. The 54-year-old spent two decades climbing the ranks at Amoco Corp., which merged with BP, and lost out to Hayward on the CEO's slot three years ago.

Analysts say Dudley's job will involve nothing short of rehabilitating the environment, compen-



PETER ANDREW BOSCH/MIAMI HERALD/MCT
Chris Wokowsky overlooks efforts of workmen tripping in the well bore at the site of the Deepwater Horizon rig accident on Saturday.

sating everyone who has suffered a loss and generally salvaging BP's global image.

Dudley has plenty of experience protecting BP's interests under great pressure. As chief of TNK-BP, a joint venture with a consortium of Russian billionaires, he steered the firm through a series of politically explosive disputes that saw one employee charged with espionage, the company's offices raided by Russian intelligence, an investor boycott and a barrage of tax and labor investigations.

In the teeth of a Russian effort to remove him from office, Dudley clung on until 2008, at one point running the company from abroad after Russian authorities barred him from the country. Despite fears that BP's partners would expropriate the British company's share of the venture, BP has managed to keep its cut of TNK-BP's

multibillion-dollar profits.

Managing Siberian energy fields and containing the 65 million-to-125 million-gallon Gulf slick aren't quite comparable, though the situations do have parallels, said Amy Myers Jaffe, an energy studies fellow at Rice University's public policy institute. Both involve a "complex situation involving multiple parties that might sue each other and multiple levels of government."

"I do think he did a good job in Russia, under the circumstances," she said.

Dudley also has shown a steady hand in his limited public appearances since the April 20 oil rig explosion that killed 11 workers and triggered the Gulf spill. He was the one tapped to make the rounds of the Sunday morning shows at the end of May when BP's latest bid to stanch the flow fell short.

"We failed to wrestle this beast to the ground," he said matter-of-factly.

A week later, he struck a conciliatory note as he toured the Louisiana coast with Gov. Bobby Jindal, saying he was frustrated and saddened by what he saw. He was there to promise that BP would fund state efforts to build sand berms to protect barrier islands from the oil.

"We understand the importance of this," he said. "We are deeply sorry."

BP did not respond to a request from the Associated Press for an interview with Dudley.

Industry insiders such as former Shell Oil president John Hofmeister have argued that BP from the start should have made an American the public face of its spill recovery efforts.

"I've been saying for weeks that Tony Hayward ought to pass this over to his top American executive," Hofmeister said Sunday. "He has completely competent people in the U.S. that can represent him in every instance."

Hofmeister said Dudley has been involved in the Gulf oil spill recovery effort from the start, and he expects no changes in BP's approach once he takes over.

"I think this is just a natural step for him to be exclusively focused on this aftermath," he said.

President Barack Obama has said he would fire Hayward if he could, and many Gulf Coast residents have had their fill of him as well.

Craig Bielkiewicz, a fisherman who's unemployed as a result of the spill, said as long as BP foots the bill for the cleanup, it's better that Hayward just stay away.

Officials: Suicide Bombs Kill 33 In Iraq

BY KIM GAMEL
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD — Suicide bombers in a crowded Baghdad commercial district and Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit killed as many as 33 people Sunday as insurgents tried to turn a monthlong deadlock over forming a new Iraqi government to their advantage.

The latest violence began when bombers drove two cars packed with nearly 180 pounds (82 kilograms) of ammonium nitrate toward the gates of the Trade Bank of Iraq building in Baghdad and detonated the explosives after striking the surrounding blast walls, said Iraqi military spokesman Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi.

Al-Moussawi said at least 18 people were killed and 42 wounded. But three Iraqi police officials and a doctor at the Yarmouk hospital where many victims were taken put the toll at 28 killed and 57 wounded. Conflicting casualty tolls are common in the chaotic aftermath of bombings in Iraq.

Hours later, a man wearing an explosives vest blew himself up as

police and onlookers responded to a roadside bomb apparently set as a trap in the northern city of Tikrit. At least five people were killed and 12 wounded in the late night attack, according to police and hospital officials.

The attacks added weight to warnings that insurgents would try to foment unrest as politicians squabble over forming a new government more than three months after inconclusive national elections.

The explosions capped a week in which about 100 people were killed in bombings and shootings nationwide, including at least 26 who died in a commando-style assault against the central bank in Baghdad last Sunday. An al-Qaida in Iraq front group, the Islamic State of Iraq, claimed responsibility for that attack, saying it targeted the institution responsible for funneling "oil money and the stolen wealth of Muslims" to the West.

Sectarian bloodshed that pushed the country to the brink of civil war in 2006-2007 has dropped sharply after a series of U.S.-Iraqi offensives, a Sunni revolt against al-Qaida and a Shiite militia ceasefire. But Iraqis still face near-daily attacks.

Many are venting their anger at politicians for failing to choose a prime minister and form a government, even though the new parliament was seated last week. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has been acting in a caretaker role as he battles to keep his job after a rival Sunni-backed political bloc won a narrow victory in the March 7 parliamentary vote.

The head of the Iraqiya bloc, Ayad Allawi, has warned more violence could ensue if the Sunnis who backed him feel sidelined by a Shiite alliance between al-Maliki's party and a hard-line religious group.

Ahmed Abdullah, an engineer in the Electricity Ministry, said bickering politicians "have encouraged al-Qaida sleeper cells to resume work and strike again."

"Ordinary Iraqis are paying the price of the political struggle in Baghdad," he said.

Hassan al-Janabi, a 44-year-old hotel employee in Baghdad, said he has altered his routine to avoid crowded areas and rush hour traffic, which have been popular targets for insurgents seeking to maximize casualties.

"I believe the deteriorating security situation is connected to the political struggle and the fight between politicians over power and government," he said. "I think that attacks will increase because regional countries will increase their interference in Iraq after the upcoming withdrawal of U.S. forces."

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